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CRIME IN GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

by

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## INTRODUCTION

This study examined data on crime and the criminal justice system in Grand Island and Hall County, Nebraska. It was designed to address some of the questions raised by a Grand Island Chamber of Commerce task force on crime and the criminal justice system.

This report is composed of three parts. The first part analyzes data on crime and juvenile delinquency, the second examines data on the criminal justice system, and the third section summarizes the results of a telephone survey of Grand Island area residents' perceptions of crime.

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The population of Hall County in 1980 was 47,690<sup>1</sup>, an increase of 11.3 percent since 1970. The county population was predominantly white (98.1 percent). Blacks comprised .3 percent of the population while American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and others made up 1.6 percent. In the total Hall County population 2.8 percent were of Spanish origin.

The City of Grand Island experienced a population increase of 2.5 percent from 1970 to 1980. The 1980 Census data showed a population of 33,180. As in Hall County, whites predominated (97.8 percent), and only a small proportion

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<sup>1</sup> Data on demographic characteristics were taken from The 1980 Census of Population and Housing Advance Reports. This source compares 1970 and 1980 Census data and differs in some instances from data compiled from Crime in Nebraska.

of the population was black (.3 percent) or were in the categories including American Indians, Pacific Islanders, or others (1.8 percent). Persons of Spanish origin totaled 3.2 percent of the population.

#### CRIME TRENDS

Crime statistics from 1971 through 1980 were analyzed.<sup>1</sup> These data included the seven index crimes: murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Data for arson were included for 1980, the year it was first added to the list of index crimes by the Federal Uniform Crime Report.

#### Grand Island

Table 1 presents crime data for the City of Grand Island. As the data indicate, an increase of 246 percent (from 624 to 2,162) took place in the number of crimes from 1971 to 1980.<sup>2</sup> The rate of crimes per 1,000 population also rose from 19.9 in 1971 to 65.2 in 1980 or an increase of 228 percent.

Murder rates remained stable over the decade. In the years 1972 and 1974 through 1978 no reported murders occurred. One murder per year was reported in the other years, a rate of .03 per 1,000 population.

The number of reported rapes varied from 0 to 4 per year. The years 1975, 1976, and 1980 each had 4 reported

---

<sup>1</sup> Crime in Nebraska, a publication of the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, did not begin publication of crime figures until 1971.

<sup>2</sup> The numbers of crimes reported were those that are made known to law enforcement officials. For a detailed discussion see the Federal Uniform Crime Report, 1980, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

TABLE 1

## CRIME IN GRAND ISLAND (1972-1980)

## Number and Rate of Crimes

Year	Population	Crime Index		Murder		Rape		Robbery		Assault		Burglary		Larceny		Motor Vehicle Theft		Arson	
		Total		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per	
		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000	
		N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population
1971	31,269	624	19.9	1	.03	0	.00	3	.10	2	.06	217	6.90	332	10.6	69	2.20	*	
1972	31,269	607	19.4	0	.00	2	.06	7	.20	1	.03	175	5.60	359	11.5	63	2.00	*	
1973	34,299	1,048	30.6	1	.03	2	.06	5	.10	6	.20	205	6.00	767	22.4	62	1.80	*	
1974	34,299	1,359	39.8	0	.00	3	.09	8	.23	8	.23	280	8.20	1,004	29.3	56	1.60	*	
1975	35,081	1,344	38.3	0	.00	4	.10	11	.31	8	.23	224	6.40	1,027	29.3	70	2.00	*	
1976	35,400	1,425	40.3	0	.00	4	.10	7	.20	9	.25	199	5.62	1,144	32.3	62	1.75	*	
1977	42,500	1,421	33.4	0	.00	3	.07	19	.45	9	.21	276	6.50	1,040	24.5	74	1.70	*	
1978	37,030	1,563	42.2	0	.00	2	.05	9	.24	22	.60	261	7.00	1,177	31.8	92	2.50	*	
1979	34,592	2,114	61.1	1	.03	2	.06	8	.23	40	1.20	347	10.03	1,575	45.5	141	4.08	*	
1980	33,160	2,162	65.2	1	.03	4	.12	9	.27	4	.12	369	11.10	1,627	49.1	128	3.90	20	.6

## Percentage Change, Rate per 1,000 Population (1971-1980)

+228%	0%	- <sup>a/</sup>	+170%	+100%	+61%	+363%	+77%
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\*No data available

<sup>a/</sup> Percentage increase not calculated due to base year having 0 reported cases.Source: *Crime in Nebraska* (1971-1980)



rapes, a rate of .1 per 1,000 population.

Robbery rates over the decade were somewhat more variable than were those for murder or rape. The number of robberies ranged from 3 in 1971 to 19 in 1977, and the rates per 1,000 population from .1 to .45.

Assault rates fluctuated from 1971 to 1980. The greatest increase (100 percent) occurred in 1979, when the rate jumped from .6 to 1.2. However, in 1980 only 4 assaults were reported bringing the rate down to .12.

Burglary rates were higher than those for murder, rape, robbery, or assault. The number of burglaries varied from 175 in 1972 to 369 in 1980, and the rate per 1,000 population varied from 5.6 in 1972 to 11.1 in 1980. The most significant increases in rates were from 1973 to 1974 when an increase of 37 percent from 6 cases to 8.2 took place. and from 1978 to 1979, an increase of 43 percent from 7 incidents to 10.03. The rate increased by 61 percent from 1971 to 1980.

Larceny occurred more frequently than any other index crime. The rates increased steadily over the decade from 10.6 per 1,000 population in 1971 to 49.1 in 1980, an increase of 363 percent. The greatest increases occurred from 1972 to 1973, 11.5 to 22.4 or 95 percent and from 1978 to 1979, 31.8 to 45.5 or 43 percent. From 1976 to 1977, the larceny rate actually dropped by 24 percent from 32.2 to 24.5.

Motor vehicle theft rates fluctuated from 1.6 per 1,000

population to 2.5 until 1979 when the rate increased by 63 percent to 4.08. In 1980, 128 motor vehicle thefts were reported, a rate of 3.9 per 1,000 population.

Data on arson were available for 1980 only. In that year, 20 cases of arson were reported or .6 per 1,000 inhabitants.

#### Hall County

Data for Hall County were examined and compared with Nebraska as a whole. (See Tables 2 and 3.) Data were available for Hall County for the years 1972 and later.

The number of reported index crimes in Hall County increased substantially from 720 in 1972 to 2,499 in 1980. The rate of crimes per 1,000 population increased 212 percent from 16.8 in 1972 to 52.4 in 1980.

Rates for murder, rape, and robbery remained at less than .5 per 1,000 inhabitants over the nine-year period. Assault rates fluctuated. Dramatic increases in assault rates were evident in 1974 (114 percent) and again in 1979 (100 percent). In 1980 the rate dropped by 66 percent from 1.0 to .34. From 1972 to 1980, the rate of assault increased 183 percent.

Burglary increased 90 percent from a rate of 5.1 in 1972 to 9.7 in 1980. Motor vehicle theft increased 81 percent from 1.6 in 1972 to 2.9 in 1980. Larceny rates were higher than those for other index crimes and increased substantially (300 percent) over the period surveyed from 9.7 in 1972 to 38.8 in 1980. In 1980, 21 cases of arson were reported

TABLE 2

## CRIME IN HALL COUNTY (1972-1980)

Number and Rate of Crimes

Year	Population	Crime Index		Murder		Rape		Robbery		Assault		Burglary		Larceny		Motor Vehicle Theft		Arson	
		Total		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per		Rate per	
		N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population
1972	42,851	720	16.8	2	.05	4	.09	8	.19	5	.12	219	5.1	415	9.7	67	1.6	*	
1973	43,682	1,165	26.7	1	.02	4	.09	6	.14	6	.14	241	5.5	845	19.3	62	1.4	*	
1974	43,550	1,511	34.7	0	.00	3	.07	9	.20	12	.30	333	7.6	1,091	25.1	63	1.4	*	
1975	45,327	1,495	33.0	0	.00	6	.13	11	.20	14	.30	293	6.5	1,099	24.2	72	1.6	*	
1976	44,526	1,627	36.5	0	.00	6	.13	7	.16	14	.31	294	6.6	1,237	27.8	69	1.5	*	
1977	45,901	1,656	36.0	1	.02	5	.11	21	.46	15	.33	384	8.4	1,140	24.8	90	2.0	*	
1978	45,865	1,839	40.1	1	.02	3	.07	9	.20	23	.50	361	7.9	1,342	29.3	100	2.2	*	
1979	45,569	2,386	51.2	1	.02	2	.04	9	.19	46	1.00	419	9.0	1,746	37.5	163	3.5	*	
1980	47,651	2,499	52.4	1	.02	5	.10	10	.21	16	.34	460	9.7	1,849	38.8	137	2.9	21	.4

Percentage Change, Rate per 1,000 Population (1972-1980)

212%	- 60%	+10%	+11%	+183%	+90%	+300%	+81%
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\*No data available

Source: *Crime in Nebraska* (1972-1980)

TABLE 3

## CRIME IN NEBRASKA (1971-1979)

Number and Rate of Crimes

Year	Population	Crime Index Total		Murder		Rape		Robbery		Assault		Burglary		Larceny		Motor Vehicle Theft	
		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000		Rate per 1,000	
		N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population	N	Population
1971	1,512,000	24,088	15.9	39	.03	212	.14	544	.36	1,560	1.0	8,337	5.5	9,546	6.3	3,850	2.5
1972	1,525,000	26,233	17.2	44	.03	212	.14	803	.53	1,579	1.0	8,489	5.6	11,117	7.3	3,989	2.6
1973	1,542,000	43,349	28.1	67	.04	254	.17	964	.63	1,574	1.0	9,828	6.4	25,994	16.9	4,668	3.0
1974	1,543,000	51,603	33.4	55	.04	291	.19	1,404	.91	1,947	1.3	11,939	7.7	31,685	20.5	4,282	2.8
1975	1,546,000	55,873	36.1	66	.04	297	.19	1,398	.90	2,225	1.4	11,752	7.6	36,563	23.7	3,572	2.3
1976	1,553,000	55,317	35.6	45	.03	318	.20	979	.63	1,927	1.2	10,626	6.8	37,795	24.3	3,627	2.3
1977	1,561,000	55,019	35.2	61	.04	282	.18	1,010	.65	1,760	1.1	11,864	7.6	36,154	23.2	3,888	2.5
1978	1,565,000	53,856	34.4	47	.03	286	.18	1,015	.65	1,634	1.0	11,687	7.5	35,794	22.9	3,393	2.2
1979	1,574,000	62,851	39.9	65	.04	338	.22	1,157	.74	1,996	1.3	12,804	8.1	42,195	26.8	4,296	2.7
1980	1,563,921	67,330	43.1	69	.04	363	.23	1,286	.82	1,794	1.1	14,316	9.2	45,692	29.2	3,810	2.4

Percentage Change, Rate Per 1,000 Population (1971-1980)

+171%	+33%	+64%	+127%	10%	67%	363%	- 4%
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Source: *Crime in Nebraska* (1971-1980)

or a rate of .4 per 1,000 inhabitants.

### Nebraska

Data for the State of Nebraska show a steady increase in the rate of index crimes over the decade. The rate of reported crimes rose 171 percent from 15.9 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1971 to 43.1 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1980. Rates for murder, rape, and robbery remained at less than 1 per 1,000 inhabitants. (See Table 3.) Rates for assault remained stable over the decade at about 1.1 while rates for motor vehicle theft generally remained between 2 and 3.

As in Grand Island and Hall County, larceny was the index crime that occurred most frequently. Larceny rates for the state increased by 363 percent from 6.3 in 1971 to 29.2 in 1980.

### Summary

The rate of total index crimes in Grand Island rose 228 percent from 1971 to 1980. Increases occurred in all crime categories except murder; the largest increase, 363 percent, occurred in the larceny rate.

The total crime rate for Grand Island was higher than for the state as a whole. While Nebraska had a total crime rate of 43.1 in 1980, Grand Island had a rate of 65.2. Grand Island's rate also increased at a faster rate than that of the state (228 percent vs. 171 percent, respectively). Compared to the statewide data, Grand Island had somewhat lower 1980 rates for rape, robbery, assault, and murder.

While the statewide rate for murder increased 33 percent over the decade, the rate in Grand Island did not. Rates for burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft were higher in Grand Island than for the state as a whole. Grand Island also experienced greater percentage increases in robbery and assault rates than did the state. While Nebraska as a whole realized a 4 percent drop in motor vehicle theft, Grand Island's rate increased 77 percent. Statewide, a larger increase took place in the burglary rate than in Grand Island. Larceny rate increases were the same for Grand Island and the state.

#### Comparison of Crime Trends in Other Nebraska Cities

A comparison was also made with crime rates for the cities of Kearney, North Platte, Hastings, Lincoln, and Omaha. (See Table 4.) All six Nebraska cities examined experienced increases in the crime rate over the survey period. North Platte's total index crime rate increased the most (700 percent) followed by Grand Island (228 percent). Crime increased at lower rates in the remaining four cities.

Grand Island's 1980 total index crime rate of 65.2 was somewhat less than that of North Platte (68.8), Lincoln (66.3), and Omaha (79.8); it was higher than Kearney's (64) or Hastings' (53.7) rates. Only Hastings had lower rates for murder, rape, assault, and burglary than Grand Island, and only Kearney had a lower robbery rate.

Grand Island's larceny rate, however, was higher than

TABLE 4  
COMPARISON OF CRIME RATE CHANGES BY CITY, 1971-1980

City	Year	Population	Percent Change 1971-80	Crime Index Total			Murder			Rape			Robbery		
				N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80
Grand Island	1971	31,269		624	19.9		1	.03		0	.00	<sup>a/</sup>	3	.10	
	1980	33,160	+2.5	2,162	65.2	+228	1	.03	0	4	.12	- <sup>a/</sup>	9	.27	+170
Kearney	1971	19,181		506	26.4		1	.00	<sup>a/</sup>	2	.10		3		
	1980	21,149	+10.0	1,354	64.0	+142	1	.05	- <sup>a/</sup>	5	.24	+140	0	.00	- 100
North Platte	1971	19,447		167	8.6		0	.00	<sup>a/</sup>	1	.05		1	.05	
	1980	24,475	+26.0	1,684	68.8	+700	1	.04	- <sup>a/</sup>	5	.20	+300	10	.41	+720
Hastings	1971	23,580		487	20.7		0	.00		0		<sup>a/</sup>	1	.04	
	1980	23,019	+2.4	1,237	53.7	+159	0	.00	0	1	.04	- <sup>a/</sup>	12	.52	+1,200
Lincoln	1971	149,518		6,004	40.2		3	.02		26	.17		24	.16	
	1980	171,848	+15.0	11,390	66.3	+65	6	.04	+100	57	.33	+94	75	.44	+175
Omaha	1971	346,929		18,597	53.6		23	.07		122	.35		482	1.40	
	1980	312,919	- 10.0	24,978	79.8	+49	38	.12	+71	213	.68	+94	1,053	3.40	+143

City	Year	Assault			Burglary			Larceny			Motor Vehicle Theft			Arson	
		N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per 1,000	Percent Change 1971-80	N	Rate per
Grand Island	1971	2	.06		217	6.9		332	10.6		69	2.2		-	-
	1980	4	.12	+100	369	11.1	+61	1,627	49.1	+363	128	3.9	+77	20	.60
Kearney	1971	38	2.00		128	6.7		313	16.3		22	1.5			
	1980	21	1.00	- 50	240	11.3	+69	978	46.2	+183	100	4.7	+213	3	.14
North Platte	1971	5	.30		87	4.5		62	3.2		11	.6			
	1980	25	1.00	+233	269	11.0	+144	1,307	53.4	+1,569	61	2.5	+317	6	.25
Hastings	1971	16	.70		29	1.2		420	17.8		21	.9			
	1980	21	.90	+29	170	7.4	+517	981	42.6	+139	51	2.2	+144	1	.04
Lincoln	1971	542	3.60		782	5.2		4,358	29.1		269	1.8			
	1980	341	2.00	+44	2,589	15.0	+188	7,816	45.5	+56	377	2.2	+22	129	.75
Omaha	1971	2,451	7.00		3,708	10.7		8,918	25.7		2,893	8.3			
	1980	679	2.20	- 69	5,531	17.7	+65	15,138	48.4	+88	1,958	6.3	+24	548	1.8

<sup>a/</sup> Percentage increase not calculated, due to base year having 0 reported cases.

that for all cities except North Platte. Grand Island's rate for motor vehicle theft was lower than that for Kearney and Omaha but higher than that for the other cities examined. It had an arson rate below that of Lincoln and Omaha.

The increase in Grand Island's robbery rate (170 percent) was higher than that for Kearney or Omaha. Lincoln experienced an increase in the robbery rate (175 percent) comparable to Grand Island's. North Platte and Hastings, however, showed increases of 720 percent and 1,200 percent, respectively.

Care should be taken in interpreting the rather dramatic appearing percentage increases in the serious crime of robbery, since in terms of absolute numbers, a 170 percent increase for Grand Island represents an increase of 6 robberies between 1971 and 1980. In the case of North Platte the increase was from 1 to 10 robberies and for Hastings, the increase was from 1 to 12.

Assault and larceny rates increased most in North Platte and Grand Island. North Platte's larceny rate jumped by 1,569 percent over the decade, compared to Grand Island's 363 percent increase. The other four cities examined had increases ranging from 56 percent (Lincoln) to 183 percent (Kearney). Omaha and Lincoln showed the smallest increases in motor vehicle theft rates (24 percent and 22 percent, respectively). Grand Island showed an increase of 77 percent. Increases in the other cities ranged from 144 percent to 317 percent.



## JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Data on juvenile arrests for Nebraska for the years 1977 through 1980 are shown in Table 5. Since data for the state prior to 1977 were not comparable, they were not included in the tables.

In the State of Nebraska as a whole, juvenile arrests decreased by 14 percent (from 14,092 to 12,180) over the period 1977 to 1980. The largest number of arrests were made for larceny, burglary, vandalism, and violation of liquor laws. Arrests for burglary decreased by 37 percent from 1,181 to 747 between 1977 and 1980. Arrests for larceny, vandalism, and violation of liquor laws showed decreases of under 5 percent for that period. (See Table 5.)

Murder/manslaughter arrests declined by 50 percent. Increases were recorded for death by negligence, rape, fraud, stolen property, prostitution/vice, sex offenses, offenses against children/families, driving under the influence, and disorderly conduct.

Juvenile court referrals for years 1977 through 1980 are shown in Table 6. During that period, the number of total cases increased by 29 percent from 217 to 280. Referrals for major offenses remained fairly stable with the exception of the year 1979 when the number of referrals jumped by 61 percent from 126 to 203. Referrals for minor offenses increased by 40 percent in 1979 from 88 to 123 and remained high in 1980 while referrals for dependent/neglect cases remained stable over the four year period.

TABLE 5

NEBRASKA JUVENILE ARREST DATA (1977-1980)

Offense	1977 N	1978 N	1979 N	1980 N	Percent Change 1977-80
Murder, manslaughter	8	4	12	4	- 50
Death by negligence	1	2	1	2	+100
Forcible rape	18	13	34	20	+11
Robbery	127	102	122	107	- 16
Felony assault	106	90	67	67	- 37
Burglary	1,181	1,048	889	747	- 37
Larceny - theft	3,562	3,349	3,583	3,409	- 04
Motor vehicle theft	454	458	388	305	- 33
Misdemeanor assault	451	317	375	352	- 22
Arson	44	31	89	45	- 02
Forgery, counterfeiting	103	86	111	82	- 20
Fraud	97	116	116	108	+11
Embezzlement	4	6	6	0	- 100
Stolen property - buying, receiving, possessing	209	185	197	256	+22
Vandalism	1,105	834	1,011	1,093	- 01
Weapons offenses	60	58	80	51	- 15
Prostitution, commercialized vice	15	6	16	24	+60
Sex offenses	38	57	56	56	+47
Drug abuse violations	918	746	536	456	- 50
Gambling	0	0	0	3	—
Offenses against families, children	10	7	5	11	+10
Driving under the influence	290	302	332	313	+08
Liquor laws	1,757	1,585	1,768	1,733	- 01
Drunkenness - intoxication*	318	323	—	—	—
Disorderly conduct	460	509	505	611	+33
Vagrancy	6	8	2	1	- 83
All other offenses	1,408	1,268	1,285	1,376	- 02
Suspicion	79	72	36	31	- 61
Curfew, loitering violation	712	462	491	455	- 36
Runaways	551	523	451	462	- 16
Total	14,092	12,567	12,564	12,180	- 14

\*No longer an offense due to change in the Nebraska Criminal Code

Source: *Crime in Nebraska* (1977-1980)

TABLE 6

GRAND ISLAND JUVENILE JUSTICE DATA (1977-1980)

Year	Juvenile Court Referrals			Total Cases
	Major Offenses	Minor Offenses	Dependent-Neglect	
1977	132	56	29	217
1978	126	88	28	242
1979	203	123	28	356
1980	123	128	29	280

TABLE 7

GRAND ISLAND LAW ENFORCEMENT EMPLOYEE DATA (1971-1980)

Year	Total Full-time	Sworn Officers		Civilians		Sworn Personnel Per 1,000 Population
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1971	49	42	1	3	3	1.4
1972	49	41	1	3	4	1.4
1973	51	42	1	1	7	1.2
1974	50	42	1	0	7	1.2
1975	42	42	1	1	5	1.2
1976	56	40	0	2	14	1.1
1977	49	42	0	1	6	1.0
1978	49	42	0	0	7	1.3
1979	47	41	1	0	5	1.2
1980	47	41	1	0	5	1.3

## THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The second part of this study examined data on law enforcement, the courts, and corrections in Grand Island and Hall County.

### Grand Island Police Personnel

As shown in Table 7, the number of full-time law enforcement personnel remained stable over the decade as did the number of sworn personnel per 1,000 population. The personnel were predominately male with only one female officer.

### Hall County Sheriff's Department

The data on the sheriff's department show an increase of 167 percent in the number of full-time employees (from 15 to 40) since 1971. (See Table 8.)

### Probation System

Data on District 8 (Hall County) probation personnel are shown in Table 9. Although the number of probation officers increased each year from 1971 ( $n = 2$ ) to 1974 ( $n = 7$ ) and remained constant from 1974 to 1978, the number of cases per probation officer rose steadily. In 1971, the number of cases per probation officer was 63; in 1979 it was 260. However, in 1980 the number was reduced to 163.5 cases per officer.

Table 10 provides a composite view of the number of individuals sentenced to probation, the number of pre-sentence investigations, and the number of revocations in Probation

TABLE 8

HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT DATA (1971-1980)

Year	Total Full-time Employees	Sworn Personnel	Civilian Personnel
1971	15	14	1
1972	15	10	5
1973	15	12	3
1974	*	*	*
1975	32	20	1
1976	28	15	13
1977	28	15	13
1978	30	18	12
1979	44	15	29
1980	40	15	25

\*No report submitted

TABLE 9

DISTRICT 8 PROBATION PERSONNEL (1971-1980)

	Probation Officers	Cases per Probation Officer	Presentence Investigation
1971	2	63.0	67.0
1972	3	50.3	75.0
1973	4	39.7	58.5
1974	7	43.6	40.14
1975	7	56.4	49.0
1976	7	59.7	52.7
1977	7	119.9	105.0
1978	7	162.6	127.9
1979	4	260.0	172.7
1980	4	163.5	139.7

NOTE: Effective July 1, 1979, Probation District 8 was split to form District 17. District 8 initially consisted of Hall, Howard, Greeley, Wheeler, Garfield, Loup, Blaine, Custer, Valley, Sherman, and Buffalo Counties. District 8 retained Hall and Howard Counties, and District 17 was formed of the remaining counties.

TABLE 10

DISTRICT 8 - PROBATION DEPARTMENT (1971-1980)

	Client Supervision Annual Case Breakdown			New Case Total	Presentences	Revocation	Total Caseloads
	District County	County Court	Juvenile Court				
1971	*	*	*	100	134	6	127
1972	*	*	*	159	226	27	151
1973	105	54	*	174	234	21	159
1974	112	60	11	313	281	26	305
1975 <sup>a/</sup>	155	93	147	404	343	46	395
1976	180	148	90	395	369	28	418
1977	257	503	79	748	735	32	839
1978	275	751	112	914	895	53	1,138
1979	272	648	120	700	691	15	1,040
1980	174	414	66	614	559	6	654

\*Data not available

<sup>a/</sup> In 1975, the Nebraska Statewide Probation System data began including county court and district court juvenile cases with juvenile court cases.

NOTE: Probation District 8 initially consisted of Hall, Howard, Greeley, Wheeler, Garfield, Loup, Blaine, Custer, Valley, Sherman, and Buffalo Counties. Effective July 1, 1979, Probation District 8 was split, retaining Hall and Howard, to form Probation District 17 containing the remaining counties previously in District 8.

Source: *Composite Report, Nebraska Statewide Probation System.*

District 8.

The number of total cases increased dramatically from 1971 (100 cases) to 1978 (914) but this number dropped to 614 in 1980. The number of pre-sentence investigations and caseloads also increased up to 1978, but in 1979 they declined.

Table 11 examines the number of offenders sentenced to probation in District 8 and Nebraska. The data for District 8 indicate that the number increased by 52 percent (from 833 to 1,270) between 1977 and 1980. For the State of Nebraska the number increased by 148 percent (from 6,877 to 16,376).

#### COURTS

Figure 1 shows the number of preliminary hearing petitions filed and preliminary hearings disposed of in Nebraska and Hall County Courts.

For Hall County, the number of petitions filed per 1,000 inhabitants increased from 5 (1975) to 5.6 (1979) while the number of hearings disposed of dropped from 5.3 (1975) to 4.7 (1979).

For the State of Nebraska, the number of petitions filed per 1,000 inhabitants decreased from 27.9 to 25.6; the number of preliminary hearings disposed of increased from 25.7 to 37.7.

Figure 2 shows misdemeanor and ordinance violations filed and disposed of in Hall County and Nebraska.

For Hall County, the filed misdemeanor/ordinance violations per 1,000 inhabitants decreased from 55.2 in 1976 to 33.7 in 1979. Misdemeanor/ordinance violations disposed of also decreased from 49.9 to 29.

TABLE 11

OFFENDERS SENTENCED TO PROBATION

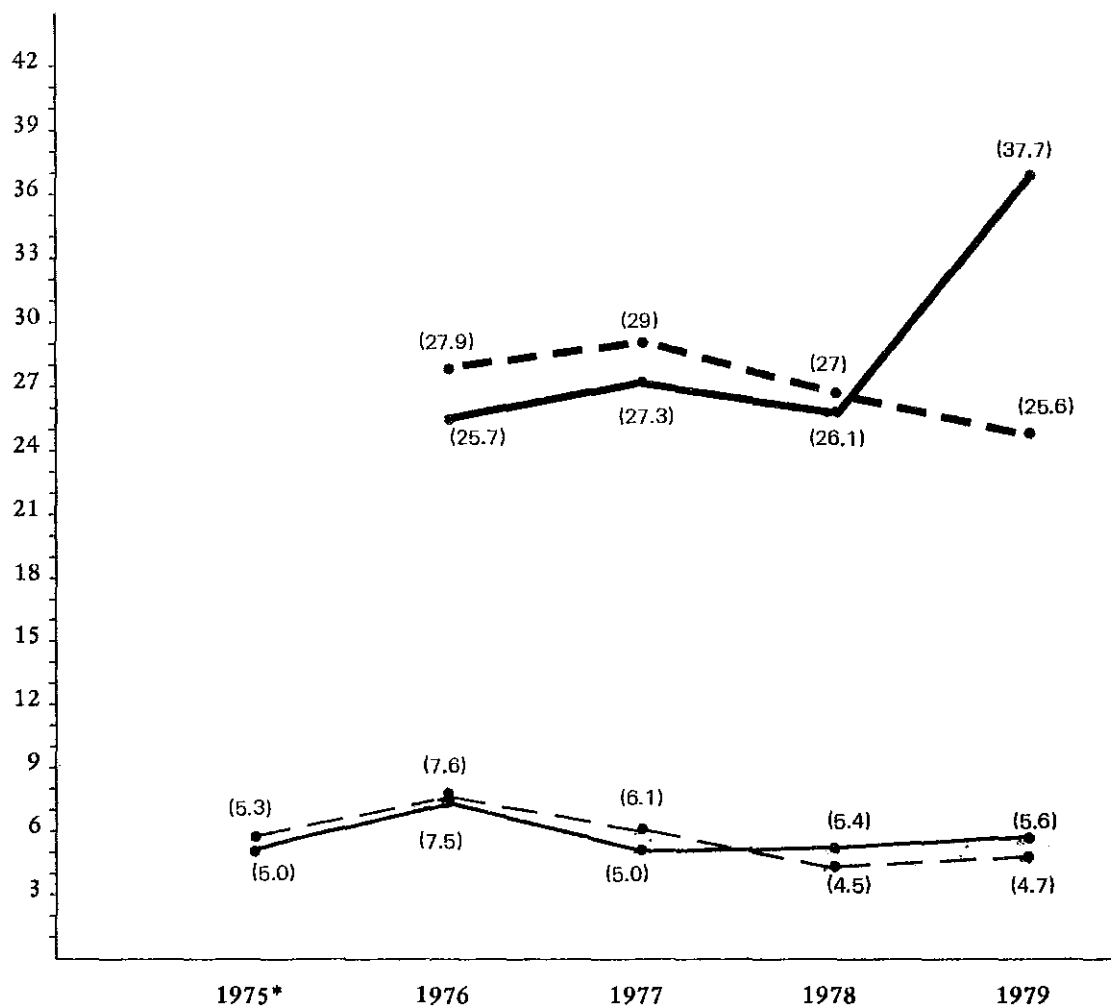
	District 8 Total				Nebraska Total			
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1977	1978	1979	1980
Homicide	3	3	2	3	47	53	82	77
Kidnapping	0	0	0	1	6	4	9	13
Sexual Assault	3	3	2	2	37	46	62	72
Robbery	1	1	—	—	45	45	69	82
Burglary	30	38	39	42	396	492	721	703
Larceny	28	33	51	41	379	377	681	685
Auto Theft	12	12	12	10	114	138	202	148
Stolen Property	5	7	9	17	96	90	164	200
Drugs	59	51	42	31	646	489	733	646
Drunkenness	20	32	29	2	93	92	108	19
Crimes Against Person	0	0	1	1	12	11	18	21
Property Crimes	1	0	0	0	25	21	42	53
Misdemeanors	594	871	1,111	995	4,489	5,482	12,343	13,260
Felonies	243	258	305	285	2,389	2,491	3,600	3,335
Totals	833	1,170	1,415	1,270	6,877	7,905	15,557	16,376

NOTE: Effective July 1, 1979 Probation District 8 was split to form District 17. District 8 initially consisted of Hall, Howard, Greeley, Wheeler, Garfield, Loup, Blaine, Custer, Valley, Sherman, and Buffalo Counties. District 8 retained Hall and Howard Counties, and District 17 was formed of the remaining counties.



FIGURE 1

PRELIMINARY HEARINGS IN NEBRASKA AND HALL COUNTY COURTS

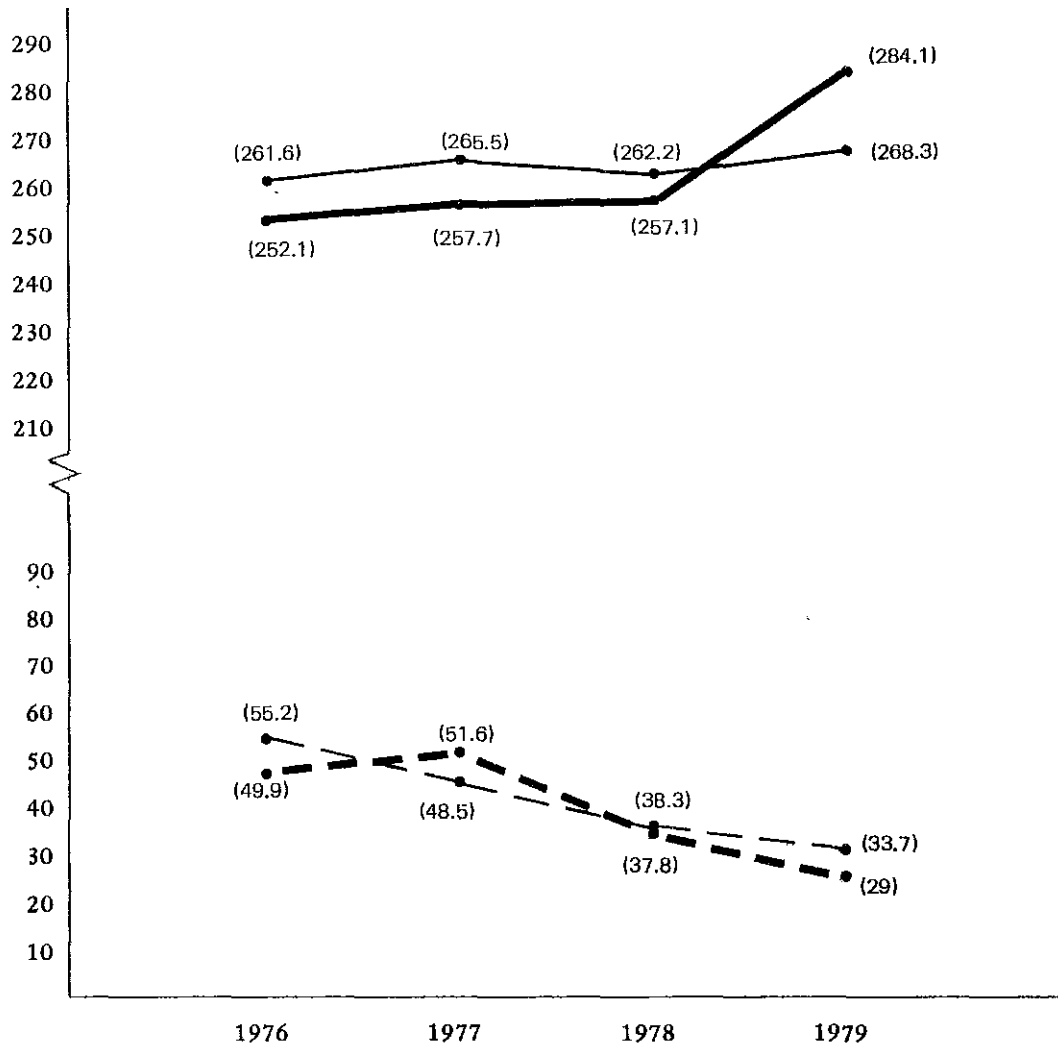


\*State figures do not represent the year 1975

- petitions filed in Hall County for preliminary hearings per 1,000 inhabitants
- - petitions filed statewide in county courts for preliminary hearings per 1,000 inhabitants
- preliminary hearings disposed of in Hall County per 1,000 inhabitants
- - preliminary hearings disposed of in the State of Nebraska per 1,000 inhabitants

Data were taken from *The Courts of Nebraska, A Report on Their Structure and Operation*, prepared by the Office of State Courts Administrator, 1976-1979.

FIGURE 2  
MISDEMEANOR AND ORDINANCE VIOLATIONS IN NEBRASKA AND HALL COUNTY  
1976-1979



- combined misdemeanor/ordinance violations filed in Hall County Court per 1,000 inhabitants
- — combined misdemeanor/ordinance violations disposed of in Hall County Court per 1,000 inhabitants
- combined misdemeanor/ordinance violations filed in Nebraska county courts per 1,000 inhabitants
- — combined misdemeanor/ordinance violations disposed of in Nebraska county courts per 1,000 inhabitants

Data were taken from *The Courts of Nebraska, A Report on Their Structure and Operation*, prepared by the Office of the State Court Administrator, 1976-1979.

For the State of Nebraska, filed misdemeanor/ordinance violations per 1,000 inhabitants increased slightly from 261.6 in 1976 to 268.3 in 1979. Misdemeanor/ordinance violations disposed of rose from 252.1 to 284.1 during the same period.

Criminal cases filed and disposed of in Nebraska and Hall County District Courts are shown in Figure 3.

For Hall County, filed criminal cases per 1,000 inhabitants decreased from 3.9 to 2.6 over the period studied; the number of criminal cases disposed of decreased from 3.9 to 2.5.

For Nebraska, filed criminal cases dropped from 26.5 to 20.4 while those disposed of dropped from 28.5 to 22.6.

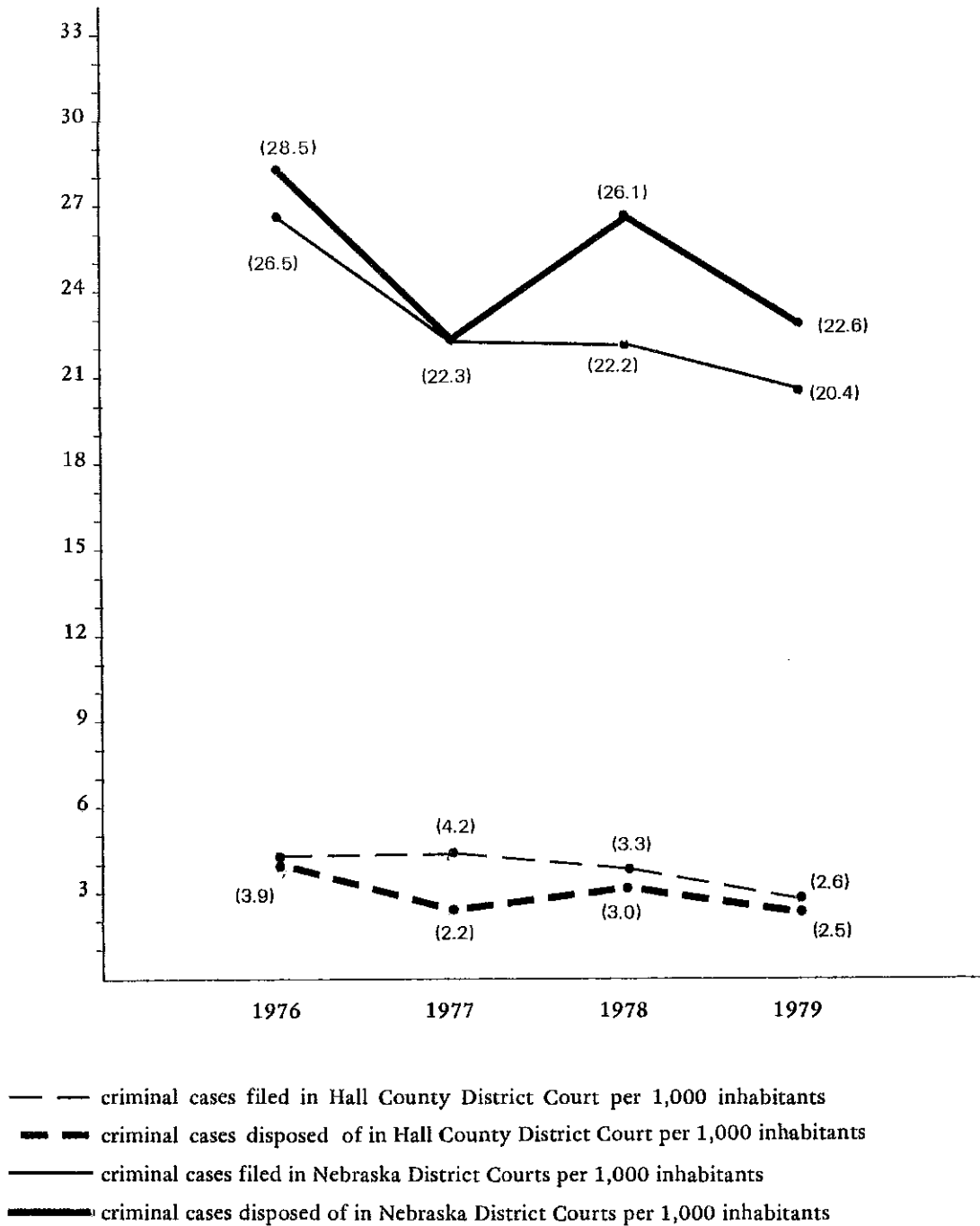
#### Residents' Perceptions of Crime Trends

In November, 1981, Grand Island area residents were surveyed on their perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system in their area. The results are shown in the Appendix.

Forty-one percent of the respondents indicated that they believed crime had increased, 47 percent believed it had remained the same, and only 8 percent believed crime had decreased. Seventy percent felt that juvenile crime was a problem.

When asked what they thought the most serious problems were in the Grand Island area, the most often mentioned problems were alcohol (83 percent), drugs (75 percent) and crime (61 percent).

FIGURE 3  
CRIMINAL CASES FILED AND DISPOSED OF IN NEBRASKA AND  
HALL COUNTY DISTRICT COURTS 1975-1979



Data were taken from *The Courts of Nebraska, A Report on Their Structure and Operation*, prepared by the Office of the State Court Administrator, 1976-1979.

In spite of this apparent concern with increasing crime, the overwhelming majority (87 percent) of the residents perceived the area to be a safe place to live. Only 22 percent said that they or a family member had been a victim of crime within the past 12 months.

Residents generally perceived the criminal justice system to be both fair and effective.

Over half the population (53 percent) felt that the police treated all citizens equally and that law enforcement was effective in discouraging the commission of crimes. Eighty-eight percent rated local law enforcement officers as doing an "average" or "good" job; 81 percent saw no need for improvement in the police.

The courts received mixed reactions from most respondents. Seventy-three percent of the respondents expressed "some confidence" or "a great deal of confidence" in the courts. However, 66 percent felt concern that the courts were not harsh enough in dealing with criminals, and 70 percent said that the courts were too slow in bringing offenders to trial.

Prisons were viewed less positively than the police or courts. When asked what the primary purpose of prison is, 29.5 percent replied that it was to remove the offender for society's protection; 27 percent believed the purpose was to rehabilitate or treat the prisoner. The majority (62 percent) felt that prisons were not achieving their primary purpose.

### Conclusion

The trends in crime in Grand Island tended to mirror the trends in the larger communities in Nebraska. In general, the increases were substantial and outpaced population growth. In 1971, approximately 20 crimes for every 1,000 residents were committed. This increased to a level in 1980, so that just over 65 crimes were committed for every 1,000 residents. This stands in contrast to a crime rate for the total State of Nebraska of 43.1 crimes per 1,000 residents and a crime rate of 79.8 per 1,000 residents in the state's largest city, Omaha. The recent levels of crime as well as the historical increase in crime in Grand Island are of sufficient magnitude to warrant special attention and action.

In general, the resources of the criminal justice system in Grand Island have remained relatively stable. With the exception of the Hall County Sheriff's Department, little expansion has taken place in the human resource capacity of the police, courts, or probation office. This lack of increase within the context of an increase in crime and agency workloads is unsatisfactory if an improvement in the efficiency of operation and outcome of the criminal justice system and its processes are to be achieved. Additional resources will have to be allocated to the criminal justice system during the 1980's.

In spite of the increase in crime and the burden that it has placed on the agencies that comprise the criminal justice system, the residents of Grand Island felt that their

community is a safe place to live and they maintained substantial confidence in and satisfaction with the criminal justice system. At the same time, residents indicated that alcohol and drug abuse are the most serious problems in Grand Island. Real or perceived, these problems need attention and amelioration as part of any strategy for improving the quality of life in Grand Island.

## APPENDIX



# APPENDIX

## GRAND ISLAND AREA CRIME SURVEY\*

1. In the past 12 months, do you feel the crime rate in your area has:

	n	%
1. increased	101	41
2. decreased	20	8
3. remained the same	117	47
4. don't know	9	4

2. Do you feel Grand Island is a safe place to live:

	n	%
1. Yes	215	87
2. No	17	7
3. Don't know	10	4
4. No answer	3	2

3. I am going to read a list of problems facing people in some communities. Please indicate whether you feel each is a problem or not in the Grand Island area.

	Problem		Not Problem		Don't Know		No Answer	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. crime	150	61	70	28	24	10	3	1
2. alcohol	206	83	26	11	15	6		
3. drugs	186	75	19	8	42	17		
4. unemployment	140	57	89	36	14	6	4	1
5. housing conditions	48	19	153	62	42	17	4	2
6. lack of recreational activities	76	31	143	58	26	10	2	1
7. moral decline/lack of religion	83	34	132	53	30	12	2	1

\* Total number of respondents (n)=247

4. Which do you feel is the most serious problem?

	n	%
1. crime	31	12.6
2. alcohol	46	19
3. drugs	42	17
4. unemployment	17	7
5. housing conditions	1	.4
6. lack of recreation	7	3
7. moral decline/lack of religion	28	11
8. don't know	14	6
9. no answer	61	24

5. Do you feel the police treat all citizens of the Grand Island area equally?

Yes		No		Don't Know		No Answer	
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
131	53	46	19	68	27	2	1

	Yes		No		Don't Know		No Answer	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
6. Are youth treated equally?	138	56	44	18	63	25	2	1
7. Are minority groups treated equally?	135	55	31	12	80	32	1	1
8. Are elderly citizens treated equally?	186	75	19	8	42	17		
9. Are low income persons treated equally?	136	55	41	17	65	26	5	2

10. From what you know or have heard, do you feel the law enforcement system in Grand Island works to discourage people from committing crimes?

	n	%
1. Yes	131	53
2. No	75	30
3. Don't know	41	17

11. Would you say, in general, that the local law enforcement officers are doing a good job, an average job, or a poor job?

	n	%
1. good	102	41
2. average	115	47
3. poor	15	6
4. don't know	13	5
9. no answer	2	1

12. In what ways could the police improve?

	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
1. no improvement needed	48	19	199	81
2. put more officers on duty	26	10.5	221	89.5
3. patrol or investigate more	25	10	222	90
4. be more prompt	17	7	230	93
5. improve training, raise qualifications or pay	20	8	227	92
6. be more courteous, concerned	17	7	230	93
7. don't discriminate	13	5	234	95
8. exercise more traffic control	9	4	238	96
9. issue more parking tickets	2	1	245	99
10. issue more traffic tickets	7	3	240	97
11. apprehend offenders more often or more promptly	16	6.5	231	93.5
12. prevent crime	9	4	238	96
13. need more officers in certain areas or at certain times	28	11	219	89
14. don't know	69	28	178	72
15. Other	57	23	190	77

Response to other:

	n	%
1. Public cooperation	1	.4
2. Public relations	5	2
3. Better youth relations	7	2.8
4. Stricter	1	.4
5. Attitude	1	.4
6. Larger budget	5	2

	n	%
7. Solve Vandalism	1	.4
8. Arrest more drunk drivers	1	.4
9. Better organization	1	.4
10. Know own problem areas	2	.8
13. Negotiate	1	.4
14. Improve judicially	14	5.7
15. Don't violate law themselves	1	.4
16. No sirens to announce	1	.4
17. Crime stopper radio	1	.4
18. Stiffer penalties	2	.4
19. Concentrate on loiterers	1	.4
20. Be physically fit	1	.4
21. Citizens groups	1	.4
Not applicable	197	79.8

13. I'm going to ask you a question about the courts in the Grand Island area. Would you say you have a great deal of confidence, some confidence, or hardly any confidence in the courts?

	n	%
1. a great deal of confidence	55	22
2. some confidence	127	51
3. hardly any confidence	42	17
4. don't know	22	9
9. no answer	1	1

14. Do you think the courts in Grand Island deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals?

	n	%
1. too harshly	2	1
2. not harsh enough	163	66
3. about right	62	25
4. don't know	14	6
5. no answer	6	2

15. Do you feel the courts move too slowly in bringing criminal offenders to trial?

	n	%
1. Yes	174	70
2. No	36	15
3. Don't know	37	15

16. In your opinion, what is the primary purpose of the prison? Is it to punish, rehabilitate or provide treatment, or remove the offender for society's protection?

	n	%
1. to punish	44	18
2. to rehabilitate or provide treatment	66	27
3. to remove the offender for society's protection	73	29.5
4. don't know	17	7
5. punish/rehabilitate	7	3
6. punish/ remove	8	3
7. rehabilitate/remove	20	8
8. all	11	4
9. no answer	1	.5

17. Do you feel prisons are achieving this purpose?

	n	%
1. Yes	52	21
2. No	152	62
3. Don't know	38	15
4. No answer	5	2

18. Do you feel probation is an effective approach to reducing crime?

	n	%
1. Yes	88	36
2. No	110	45
3. Don't know	38	15
4. No answer	11	4

19. Do you feel juvenile crime is a problem in the Grand Island area?

	n	%
1. Yes	173	70
2. No	44	18
3. Don't know	29	11
4. No answer	1	1

20. Have you or any member of your family been a victim of a crime within the last 12 months?

	n	%
1. Yes	54	22
2. No	193	78